United Nations A/60/777

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 April 2006

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Agenda item 112 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 47 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 12 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and has the honour to inform him that the Government of Armenia has decided to present its candidature at the first elections to the Human Rights Council, to be held on 9 May 2006, during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

The Republic of Armenia is strongly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and has worked consistently and constructively to this end at the national, regional and international levels. Re-elected to the Commission on Human Rights in 2005, Armenia gained an invaluable experience during its tenure. As an acknowledgement of the constructive work done by the Armenian delegation, Armenia was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights for 2006.

The Republic of Armenia would appreciate an opportunity to further contribute to the work of the United Nations human rights machinery. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution 60/251 on the Human Rights Council, Armenia provides the attached aide-memoire containing its voluntary pledges and commitments (see annex).

06-31575 (E) 280406

Annex to the note verbale dated 12 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Aide-memoire of the Republic of Armenia on election to the Human Rights Council

As a country strongly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has decided to present its candidature for the elections to the newly established Human Rights Council.

The Republic of Armenia has worked consistently and constructively towards promotion and protection of human rights at national, regional and international levels. The Government of Armenia has over the past years developed sound legal and operational human rights machinery at the national level. A continuous reform process has paved the way for Armenia's accession to the Council of Europe and implementation of the commitments undertaken upon membership.

Armenia has been successfully delivering on its national and international obligations to improve protection systems in Armenia. Over a short period of time Armenia reformed its penitentiary system, abolished death penalty and devised an appropriate legal framework to promote the rights of conscientious objectors. The legal and institutional framework for promoting all major rights and freedoms of individuals and groups was fundamentally expanded.

With the amendment of its Constitution at a referendum in November 2005, Armenia further entrenched the human rights in Armenia's legal framework by expanding the human rights provisions and streamlining them with international norms and standards, as well as Armenia's obligations under respective international legal instruments. The right to appeal to the Constitutional Court on matters of human rights has been extended to individual persons.

Armenia is a party to all major international legal instruments on human rights. It consistently delivers on its obligations under those instruments and extensively co-operates with all human rights bodies and procedures (UN, OSCE, Council of Europe).

Armenia has been equally committed to comprehensive and universal promotion and protection of all human rights at global and regional levels. In due recognition of Armenia's efforts the international community has extended its support by electing it to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2002 and subsequently re-electing in 2005. As an acknowledgement of the constructive work done by the Armenian delegation, Armenia was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights for 2006.

Armenia firmly believes that peace, security, development and human rights are strongly interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Promotion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development is crucial in this regard. Armenia is determined to contribute to further enhancing co-operation and dialogue among nations and regions in order to promote tolerance, respect and understanding among civilizations, cultures and religions, as well as to eliminating all forms of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia.

Armenia is committed to **enhancing the international human rights promotion and protection systems by strengthening its machinery and improving special procedures and mechanisms**.

Armenia is equally committed to **building on past positive experience and providing forum for active interactions and interlinkages between Governments, national institutions and civil society** within the new body.

Armenia is in full recognition of the principle of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, constructive international dialogue and co-operation in the field of human rights. It firmly supports the objective of undertaking universal periodic review of the fulfilment of human rights obligations and commitments by each state. In putting forward its candidature for the Human Rights Council, **Armenia is open for such review of its own human rights obligations and record of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms**.

Armenia remains fully supportive of further strengthening the operational capacity and mandates of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and **commits to further support the Office through voluntary contributions**.

In confirmation of its commitments, **Armenia extends an open invitation to all special procedures** established in the past, which will be transferred to the Human Rights Council.